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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**OKLAHOMA UTILITY ATTORNEY TO LEAD PSC'S  
NEW NATURAL GAS DEPARTMENT**

LINCOLN -- The Nebraska Public Service Commission has hired an Oklahoma utility attorney to lead its new Natural Gas Department.

Miles Halcomb, most recently a public utility attorney for the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, will direct Nebraska's entry into state regulation of privately-owned natural gas utilities. His appointment was made at an August 26 meeting of the Public Service Commission in Lincoln.

During the 2003 session, the Nebraska Legislature moved natural gas regulation from the local level to the state level, consistent with the regulatory practice of the other 49 states. The Legislature gave the regulatory responsibility to the Commission.

Halcomb, of Edmund, Oklahoma, was chosen from among 35 applicants for the director's post. He will start his new assignment within a month.

An application for an increase in rates has already been filed with the Public Service Commission by Aquila, formerly Peoples Natural Gas, for its Rate Area One, Two and Three communities.

Halcomb served four years as an attorney representing the Public Utility Division of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission in Oklahoma City. He was the lead counsel in Oklahoma's natural gas litigation related to high natural gas costs and deregulation during the winter of 2000-2001.

Halcomb is a graduate of Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma College of Law.

Frank Landis, Commissioner for the First District, said the Halcomb's hiring was an important step in the Commission's development of a natural gas regulatory program

under the new law. “We’re very pleased to have Miles come on board. This is a big step forward for a program that’s already accomplished a lot,” Landis said.

Anne Boyle, Chair of the Commission, said, "The commission had many quality applicants. We are very pleased Miles has accepted the position. He brings a wealth of talent and experience to the commission."

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